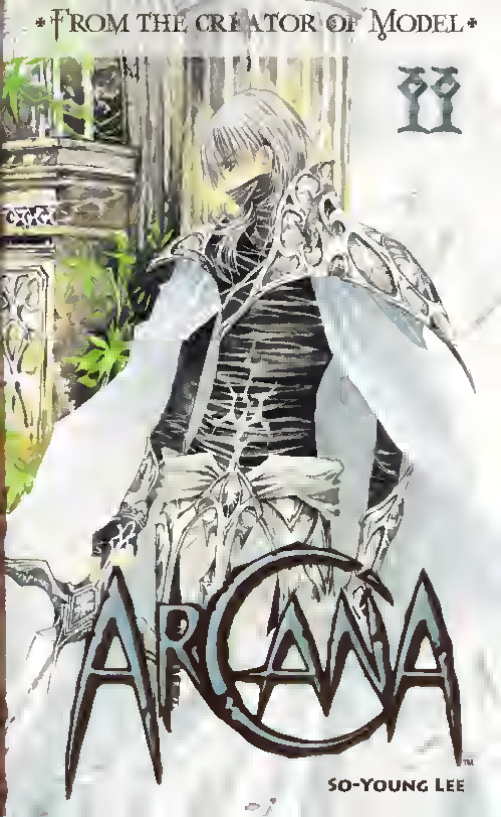
FROM THE CREATOR OF MODEL

II



ARCANA

SO-YOUNG LEE

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Aahh! What are you?!

Whoa... Don't come any closer!
Stop it Hey, let me go! Let go!!
I'm a girl! Don't touch me!!!

DON'T WORRY ABOUT THEM, INEZ
THEY'RE JUST CURIOUS THEY WON'T DO YOU ANY HARM.
BESIDES, THIS IS THEIR TERRITORY. WE'RE THE INTRUDERS.

Episode 3
Out of the Cradle

WHAT ARE THOSE WEIRD-LOOKING CREATURES?
THEY LOOK LIKE MONKEYS!
THEY'RE CALLED NYAMAS. THEY'RE DOCILE AND GENTLE BY NATURE, BUT THEIR CURIOSITY MAKES THEM OBLIVIOUS TO DANGER.
THAT MAKES THEM AN EASY TARGET FOR HUNTERS. AS A RESULT, NOT MANY OF THEM ARE LEFT.
I KNOW I'M NOT SUPPOSED TO ASK...
BUT I HAVE TO KNOW...
YULAN, WHO ARE YOU?

TO BE HONEST, I HAVE A FEELING THAT YOU'RE NOT QUITE HUMAN.
ETO
I ALSO WANT AN EXPLANATION FOR HOW YOU KNOW ALL THESE THINGS ABOUT ME THAT I DON'T EVEN KNOW!
I'M SURE YOU KNOW THAT YOU HAVE TO WASH YOUR OWN DISHES
WHAT?! WHY ARE YOU CHANGING THE SUBJECT?!
BESIDES, YOU DON'T HAVE TO TELL ME ABOUT THE DISHES. YOU DO THE COOKING... I DO THE DISHES... I KNOW THAT MUCH!
I DO HAVE A CONSCIENCE, YOU KNOW.

WAIT! WHERE ARE YOU GOING? YOU HAVEN'T ANSWERED MY QUESTIONS!
KAAGER MIGHT HAVE EXPLAINED THIS TO YOU ALREADY, BUT...
THE EMPIRE OF SUARE IS LIKE A CRADLE
ITS HISTORY SPANS THOUSANDS OF YEARS BUT IT HAS NEVER BEEN INVADED
STILL, THE MORE PERFECT IT SEEMS ON THE OUTSIDE THE LESS LIKELY IT IS TO BE SO ON THE INSIDE...

A BABY BIRD?
A LITTLE BIRD LEAVING ITS NEST FOR THE FIRST TIME MIGHT FIND EVERYTHING IN THE WORLD MARVELOUS AND FASCINATING
...BUT SOON IT LONGS FOR ITS CRADLE AGAIN
...ONE CAN AFFORD CURIOSITY WHEN SAFETY IS GUARANTEED
BUT WHEN CURIOSITY OVERSTEPS THE BOUNDS OF SAFETY...

...IT COSTS DEARLY THE NYAMAS PAY FOR THEIR CURIOSITY WITH THEIR LIVES
WHAT THE EMPEROR AND HIS SUBJECTS WANT IS A COZY NEST WHERE THEY CAN BE ETERNALLY SAFE
TO SECURE THAT SAFETY--
FINE, FINE IF YOU'RE GOING TO BE BORING..
I'LL ASK YOU SOMETHING EASIER! I'M SURE YOU'LL BE ABLE TO ANSWER *THIS* QUESTION AT LEAST

WHAT'S WITH THE DRAGON?
BOTH GRANDPA AND THE EMPEROR SAID THAT THE EMPIRE NEED'S THE DRAGON'S POWER, BUT THEY DIDN'T SAY WHY
WHY DO THEY NEED TO KEEP IT ALL SO SECRET?
HONESTLY, WHEN I FIRST HEARD ABOUT THE DRAGON, I WAS SURPRISED AND SCARED
AS YOU KNOW, EVEN MENTIONING DRAGONS IS PROHIBITED IN SUAKE
TO THE PEOPLE THERE, "DRAGON" IS ANOTHER WORD FOR FEAR.
I'M AFRAID TOO I DON'T KNOW A SINGLE THING ABOUT DRAGONS BUT WHAT TROUBLES ME EVEN MORE IS THE FACT THAT
...EVERYONE THINKS I'LL BE ABLE TO SPEAK THEIR LANGUAGE

I FIND IT HARD TO BELIEVE, BUT I WANT TO FIND OUT IF WHAT THEY THINK IS TRUE.
THAT'S ONE OF THE MAIN REASONS I AGREED TO GO ON THIS JOURNEY
AND I WANT TO SEE A DRAGON WITH MY OWN EYES ..
sing!
sing!
sing!
SHUCKS!
I HATE WASHING DISHES!!
sing!
sing!
TAK
HE'S SO TERRIBLE CHANGING SUBJECTS LIKE THAT AND DODGING MY QUESTION ABOUT THE-

Get off!
Get off of me!!
WAAA! SOMEBODY HELP!
WE DON'T HAVE A SECOND TO WASTE COME ON
WASTE?
IF I COULD GET THIS CREATURE OFF MYSELF, WOULD I BE ASKING FOR HELP?
NYAMAS ARE AFRAID OF LEAVING THEIR TERRITORY WHEN WE CROSS THE BOUNDARY. IT WILL GO BACK ON ITS OWN EVEN IF YOU WANTED TO KEEP IT WITH YOU
OH! YULAN
CAN YOU GET THIS NYAMA OR WHATEVER IT'S CALLED OFF OF ME?
REALLY? HMM, THAT MEANS I WASTED ALL THIS ENERGY FOR NOTHING
TERRITORY EH?
SO WHERE IS THIS BOUNDARY?
THAT'S UP TO THE NYAMA TO DECIDE
SIGH
YOU JERK!
ARE YOU TRYING TO BE FUNNY?!
GRRR
HAA!
HAA!
HAA!

WHAT TOOK YOU SO LONG? WHY AREN'T YOU RIDING YOUR HORSE?
DON'T TALK TO ME, YOU JERK!
IF YOU HAD HELPED WHEN I ASKED, I WOULDN'T HAVE HAD TO WALK ALL THIS WAY
THIS PAIN IN THE BUTT IS AFRAID OF HORSES!!
CAN YOU SPEAK IT'S LANGUAGE?
I COULDN'T UNDERSTAND WHAT HE WAS SAYING AT FIRST...
...HE GOT ON MY NERVES SO I REALLY CONCENTRATED
ACTUALLY, HE'S VERY SIMPLE-MINDED
HE ONLY USES ONE WORD, "MONG"
SO I'VE DECIDED TO CALL HIM MONG

I KNOW, I KNOW!
WE CAN'T LET THE BABY BIRD LEAVE HIS NEST, NOW CAN WE?

Come down now, Mang. This is where your territory ends
I have to go beyond that tree, so I can't give you a lift any longer
Come on...

CIOP
CIOP
CIOP
CIOP

IS HE ZODE'S REPLACEMENT?
I KNOW... I KNOW THIS JOURNEY ISN'T FUN AND GAMES
I KNOW I HAVE TO BE CALM AND COLLECTED, COLD-HEARTED EVEN
I HAVE TO STOP WANTING TO LIKE SOMEONE, TO DEPEND ON SOMEONE
I KNOW ALL THAT!

THEY PASSED THROUGH HERE NOT TOO LONG AGO
WE HAVE TO STAY CLOSE BEHIND IF YOU'RE RIGHT
...THE POWER OF THE HEARTSBLOOD GETS WEAKER THE FARTHER AWAY WE ARE FROM SUARE
WHERE IN THE WORLD ARE THEY TAKING THE HEARTSBLOOD?
WE CAN'T FOLLOW THEM FOREVER
IF WE LOSE ITS TRAIL WE'RE DONE FOR

WE HAVE TO GET OUR HANDS ON IT SOON, NO MATTER WHAT IT TAKES.
IT WON'T BE EASY
SHEATHE YOUR SWORD
WHAT IN THE WORLD...
THEY POSE NO THREAT TO US

WHOA!
WHAT'S WRONG?!
YUUULAN!
LOOK OVER THERE!

THOSE TREES .. THEY'RE SO WEIRD!
THEY ALL HAVE HUMAN FACES!

THIS FOREST MARKS THE END OF HUMAN TERRITORY.
IF WE CONTINUE, WE ENTER A PLACE WHERE HUMANS ARE UNPROTECTED
WHAT? WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
WHO DO YOU THINK CREATED THE CONCEPT OF "TERRITORY"?
THOSE TREES ARE A WARNING.
THOUGH THERE ARE FEWER THAN EVER BEFORE, A GREAT VARIETY OF RACES STILL INHABIT THIS LAND...
...EACH GUARDING ITS HOME AND CUSTOMS BUT THOSE WHO FIRST DEFINED THE WORD "TERRITORY" INVADED THE HOMES OF THE OTHER RACES.
NO ONE COULD STOP THEIR RAMPAGE. THEY ONLY FEARED ONE THING---THEIR OWN KIND.
IN OTHER WORDS OTHER HUMAN BEINGS
THAT'S WHY THE FOREST HAS ADOPTED HUMAN FORM TO WARN THEM.
"GO BACK" THE FOREST SAYS. FROM THIS POINT ON, HUMAN BEINGS WILL NOT BE PROTECTED

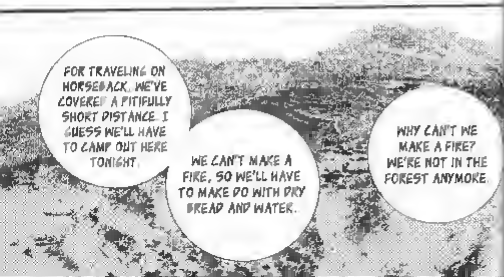
I SEE...
I THINK THAT ANSWERS A NAGGING QUESTION I HAD ABOUT YOU, TOO...
TO BE HONEST, I THOUGHT YOU HATED ME PERSONALLY.
YOU KNOW, I HAD THIS INTUITIVE FEELING...
BUT IF YOU'RE LIKE THE TREES AND DON'T LIKE ME SIMPLY BECAUSE I'M HUMAN, THEN THAT'S OKAY. THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO ABOUT IT.
BUT YOU'RE THE ONLY FRIEND I HAVE ON THIS JOURNEY.
SO A PART OF ME IS STILL SAD. IT DOESN'T FEEL GOOD TO BE HATED, AFTER ALL.
HUMAN BEINGS AREN'T ALL ALIKE. NOT EVERY HUMAN WANTS TO HARM OTHERS

NOT ALL OF THE OTHER RACES FEEL AN AVERSION TOWARD HUMANS EITHER.
SOME WOULD EVEN SACRIFICE THEMSELVES FOR THEIR HUMAN FRIENDS...
YOU HAD A FRIEND LIKE THAT TOO, DIDN'T YOU?
?!
THE FIRST ONE TO BUILD THE WALL HAS TO BE THE FIRST TO BREAK IT DOWN.
ONCE THE WALL IS GONE, THE HORIZON OPENS, AND MARVELOUS THINGS CAN FILL THE SPACE WHERE A BARRIER ONCE STOOD.
A FRIEND, I SUPPOSE, MIGHT BE THE MOST SIGNIFICANT OF THOSE MARVELOUS THINGS...
YULAN, I'M SORRY. I CAN'T TURN A DEAF EAR TO THEIR DESPERATE WISHES...
A FRIEND...
I CAN'T LOSE A FRIEND LIKE YOU, NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS.

LOOK AT THE TREES AGAIN... CLOSELY.
SEE WHAT KIND OF HUMAN FACES THEY WEAR.
BEAUTIFUL, AREN'T THEY?
YES... THEY'RE SO BEAUTIFUL. THEY'RE NOT FRIGHTENING! THEY'RE WONDERFUL
I DON'T FEEL LIKE THEY'RE WARNING ME.
IT FEELS MORE LIKE THEY'RE WELCOMING ME...
THIS FOREST MIRRORS THE SOUL OF THE PERSON WHO LOOKS WITHIN.
WHAT...WHAT DO YOU MEAN? ARE YOU SAYING THAT THE FOREST CAN SEE WHAT'S IN MY HEART?
THE FACT THAT THE TREES HAVE TAKEN ON BEAUTIFUL FACES MEANS...

..THAT YOU HAVE THEIR PERMISSION TO PASS THROUGH
ARE THOSE CREATURES STILL FOLLOWING US?
NO, THEY FEAR THE LAND BEYOND THEIR BORDERS
I'M NOT SURE WHY, BUT THEY'RE UNUSUALLY NERVOUS
AH... IT SEEMS THAT ONE OF THEIR OWN IS MISSING
HOW INTERESTING EVEN STUPID CREATURES LIKE THESE CAN WORRY ABOUT THEIR OWN KIND
THEY'RE NOT STUPID.
CALLING OTHER CREATURES STUPID JUST BECAUSE THEY'RE SIMPLER AND WEAKER IS THE WORST KIND OF HUMAN ARROGANCE.

HA HA HA--
I GUESS WHAT I SAID OFFENDED YOU. I APOLOGIZE.
WAIT, LOOK OVER THERE.


FOR TRAVELING ON HORSEBACK, WE'VE COVERED A PITIFULLY SHORT DISTANCE. I GUESS WE'LL HAVE TO CAMP OUT HERE TONIGHT.
WE CAN'T MAKE A FIRE, SO WE'LL HAVE TO MAKE DO WITH DRY BREAD AND WATER.
WHY CAN'T WE MAKE A FIRE? WE'RE NOT IN THE FOREST ANYMORE.

LOOK, IT'S JUST ROCKS ALL AROUND.
AND THERE'S PLENTY OF TWIGS TO USE AS KINDLING.

AH! I SEE.
YOU JUST DON'T WANT TO COOK FOR ME, RIGHT?
WELL, I KNOW HOW TO MAKE A DISH OR TWO.

OF COURSE I CAN'T GUARANTEE THAT IT'LL BE EDIBLE.

SIGH

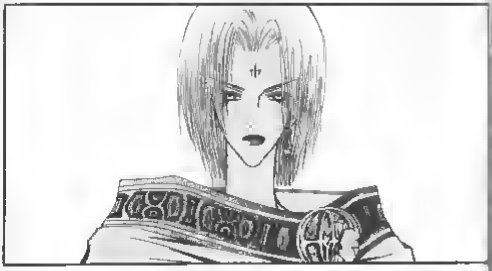
Leaving encouragement she decided to forget the whole idea.
YEAH, I LOVE BREAD, ESPECIALLY THE REALLY DRY KIND...

YULAN, WHY AREN'T YOU EATING?
IN FACT, I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU SWALLOW A SINGLE DROP OF WATER
YOU HAVEN'T BEEN...
SECRETLY EATING SOMETHING DELICIOUS, HAVE YOU?
GULP
THIS WAS A BAD IDEA.
WE SHOULD HAVE JUST LEFT IT WHERE IT WAS.
THE SQUIRMING'S GETTING ON MY NERVES.
I REALLY DON'T SEE HOW IT CAN HELP US.
I'D BETTER NOT HAVE TO CARRY THIS FOR TOO LONG
WHAT'S WORSE IS THAT IT KEEPS US FROM SPEEDING UP.
SOMEWHERE BEYOND THE HUMAN TERRITORY.
IF MY HUNCH IS CORRECT, THEY'RE TAKING THE HEARTSBLOOD PENDANT..

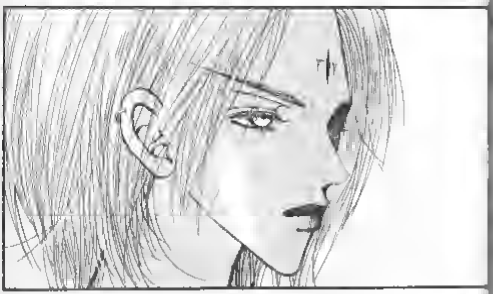
AT THE END OF THIS ROAD IS THE FOREST OF REFLECTION
REFLECTION?
IT MIRRORS THE HEARTS OF THOSE WHO WANT TO PASS THROUGH IT.
HOW CREEPY DO WE REALLY HAVE TO GO THROUGH THAT?
I THINK I'D RATHER NOT
THE FOREST OF REFLECTION MARKS THE BORDER OF THE HUMAN WORLD
IF WE'RE NOT GRANTED PASSAGE...
— WE'LL BE TRAPPED INSIDE IT FOREVER
WHAT HIDEOUS-LOOKING TREES!

ZOPE...
I MISS YOU SO MUCH..

몽!
MONG!



DON'T SAY IT! WHAT I HATE MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE IN THE WORLD IS NAGGING!



WOW, MONG WE DON'T EVER HAVE TO FART AGAIN!
OH, IT DOESN'T MATTER HOW THANK GOD YOU'RE HERE
MONG!
MONG!
I'LL WATCH OVER YOU FROM NOW ON
IT'S TOO SOON TO REJOICE
YOU'RE AMAZING! HOW DID YOU FIND US?
YOU'RE SUCH A GROUCH!
I WON'T LET MONG GO, NO MATTER WHAT YOU SAY!

SINCE YOU CAN COMMUNICATE WITH NYAMAS, ASK HIM THIS.
ASK HIM WHAT HIS DIET CONSISTS OF.
..FOOD?
Tak
HERE, THIS BREAD IS NOT VERY SOFT BUT IT'S STILL DELICIOUS!
HOW ABOUT THIS BEEF JERKY FROM MY SECRET STASH?
?
MY EMERGENCY PACK OF POWDERED MILK..?
NO GOOD.
MONG
LOOK AROUND YOU, INEZ. THERE'S NOTHING BUT ROCKS.
AND WE'LL CROSS EVEN ROUGHER TERRAIN DURING OUR JOURNEY.
WHERE DO YOU THINK WE'LL BE ABLE TO FIND FRESH FRUIT FOR YOUR LITTLE FRIEND?
NYAMAS ARE VERY PICKY ABOUT WHAT THEY EAT-- FRESH FRUIT OR NOTHING AT ALL
THEIR NUTRITIONAL INTAKE DEPENDS ENTIRELY ON FRUIT
IF, HOWEVER, YOU STILL INSIST ON TAKING HIM ALONG, I WON'T STOP YOU.

I KNOW...
...A WAY...
WE'LL JUST HAVE TO FIND FRUIT THAT DOESN'T ROT
GRANDPA TOLD ME ABOUT A SPECIAL KIND...
IT DOESN'T EXIST IN THE HUMAN WORLD, BUT HE SAID THAT IT GROWS IN ELOAM, THE LAND OF THE

JUST ONE BITE OF IT MAKES YOU FULL, HE SAID
I DON'T WANT TO PART WITH YOU, MONG
MONG
THE LITTLE CRITTER IS OUR SAVIOR HA HA HA
IT GOT US OUT OF THE FOREST OF REFLECTION AND LED US STRAIGHT TO...
...THE HEARTSBLOOD

I MUST SAY, LADY LUCK IS WITH US TODAY
THAT BOY...
I THOUGHT HE WAS A NORMAL KID AT FIRST...
...BUT I THINK I WAS WRONG ABOUT HIM
WHAT?
NYAMAS NEVER LEAVE THEIR TERRITORY. THEY RISK DEATH IF THEY DO.
AND THAT NYAMA IS JUST A BABY.
NYAMAS ARE KNOWN FOR THEIR EXTRAORDINARY POWER OF SMELL. SO I THOUGHT IT COULD HELP US FIND A WAY OUT OF THE FOREST.
BUT I'M AMAZED THAT THIS YOUNG NYAMA SOUGHT OUT THE BOY.
HE MUST DEFINITELY POSSESS POWERS WE'RE NOT AWARE OF.
WE CAN'T OVERLOOK THE FACT THAT HE'S ALSO CARRYING THE DRAGON'S HEARTSBLOOD.
THE FATE OF AN ENTIRE EMPIRE RESTS ON HIM.

THERE'S ONE MORE THING THAT WORRIES ME--
IT DOESN'T MATTER! WHETHER THE BOY IS EXTRAORDINARY OR NOT DOESN'T CHANGE THE FACT THAT WE HAVE TO GET OUR HANDS ON THE HEARTSBLOOD PENDANT
IF YOU'RE RIGHT ABOUT THE BOY, IT JUST MEANS WE HAVE A BIGGER PROBLEM ON OUR HANDS.
JUST KEEPING THEM IN SIGHT WON'T DO.
WE HAVE TO CHANGE OUR PLANS.
I KNOW YOU'RE HUNGRY, MONG, BUT TRY TO HANG IN THERE FOR TONIGHT
TOMORROW I'LL FIND YOU DELICIOUS FRUIT TO EAT
AND SOON WE'LL BE IN THE LAND OF THE ELVES
THE LAND OF FRUIT THAT DOESN'T ROT

PLEASE, YULAN, TAKE US TO THE ELF-LAND FIRST.
ELOAM...
I DON'T YET KNOW WHY
BUT MY DREAM TELLS ME THAT INEZ WILL INSIST ON GOING TO THE LAND OF THE ELVES
I'M WORRIED FOR YOU, LORD YULAN I KNOW YOU WISH TO AVOID TRAVELING THERE

BUT IN THE END, ELOAM WILL BE ONLY THE FIRST STOP ON YOUR JOURNEY
INEZ'S DESIRE IS GUIDED BY DESTINY
WIZARD, IS THAT WHAT YOU'VE BEEN SO HESITANT TO SAY TO ME?
WHY DO YOU THINK I WANT TO AVOID ELOAM?
THIS JOURNEY TAKES PLACE ONCE EVERY HUNDRED YEARS. IT ALWAYS HAS THE SAME DESTINATION. BUT THE ROUTE DIFFERS EACH TIME.
THE BEARER OF THE HEARTSBLOOD IS THE ONE WHO DETERMINES THE WAY.
YOU'RE RIGHT TO TALK ABOUT DESTINY. THE REASON THEY FOLLOW DIFFERENT ROUTES IS BECAUSE FATE GUIDES THEM.
MY ROLE IS TO ACCOMPANY THEM ON THEIR JOURNEY.
EVEN IF I WANTED TO AVOID SOME OF THOSE PLACES, I DON'T HAVE THE RIGHT TO REFUSE.

MMM

MONG!
NO NEED TO WORRY YOUR FEARS WON'T COME TRUE.
I DON'T THINK I CAN DO IT...
..THIS TIME, EITHER

WHAT'S THAT NOISE?
THE GROUND IS SHAKING IS THIS AN EARTHQUAKE?

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?! HELP ME!!
DAMMIT!

사라

WHEW!
THANKS, I OWE YOU ONE.
HOW IN THE WORLD DID YOU MANAGE TO PUT THAT BOULDER MONSTER TO SLEEP?
I'VE NEVER BEEN TO THESE PARTS. I DIDN'T KNOW YOU'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO LIGHT A FIRE HERE.
NEVER, IN A MILLION YEARS, DID I IMAGINE THAT THE ROCKS WOULD BE ALIVE.

AH, I SEE! THAT'S WHY YOU SAID THAT WE COULDN'T MAKE A FIRE.
FIRE MAKES THE ROCKS GO WILD!

HUH?
HEY THERE, KID...
...HAVE WE MET? YOU LOOK FAMILIAR.

HUH? HE DOESN'T REMEMBER?
NO--NOPE! FIRST TIME
I GUESS I JUST HAVE A PRETTY COMMON FACE HA HA HA!
THAT'S GOOD IT'D ONLY MAKE THINGS MORE AWKWARD IF HE REMEMBERED
I'LL JUST PAY HIM BACK THE MONEY I OWE HIM NEXT TIME IT LOOKS LIKE HE'S PRETTY POOR
NOPE. I WOULDN'T SAY YOU HAVE A COMMON FACE
ARE YOU A WIZARD?
JUDGING FROM WHAT YOU JUST DID YOU PROBABLY ARE. BUT YOU CERTAINLY DON'T LOOK LIKE ONE
HA HA HA! DON'T GET ME WRONG. THE WIZARDS I'VE MET ALL WEAR FUNNY HATS AND HAVE BUSHY BEARDS
OH, I FORGOT TO INTRODUCE MYSELF.
I'M--
WOW, FRUIT TREES!

MONG GET READY TO FEAST TO YOUR HEART'S CONTENT!
ALL FRESHLY PICKED FRUIT!
YOU DON'T USUALLY APPLY THE WORD "GLUTTONY" TO CHILDREN...
WHAT I WANT TO KNOW IS WHERE DO ALL THOSE CALORIES GO?
YOU'RE SO SMALL YOU MIGHT BE MISTAKEN FOR A GIRL
HIC!
YOU'D BETTER NOT BE TALKING TO ME!
AND WHY ARE YOU FOLLOWING US?
STOP TALKING CRAZY, YOU IDIOT, AND GO AWAY!
MY NAME IS KYRETTE, NOT "YOU IDIOT."
REMEMBER THAT NAME

WHAT IF I TELL YOU I DON'T WANT TO GO AWAY?
BECAUSE YOU'RE EXACTLY THE TYPE THAT I LIKE
splish
splish
HA HA HA! KIDS ARE BEST WHEN THEY'RE NAIVE
IT'S NO FUN TEASING THEM OTHERWISE
TRAVELING WITH A KID LIKE THAT MUST BE FUN
HEY, RELAX TAKE IT EASY
I'M NOT A VILLAIN YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE ON YOUR GUARD AGAINST ME

ARE YOU HEADING TOWARD ELOAM?
THE KID WAS TALKIN TO THE CRITTER ABOUT ELF FOLK
LA, LUCK WOULD HAVE IT I'M HEADED THAT WAY TOO
IF IT DOESN'T BOTHER YOU TOO MUCH, I'D LIKE TO GO WITH YOU FOLKS.
I HOPE YOU KNOW THAT IT'S POINTLESS TO SAY NO. THERE'S ONLY ONE ROAD
MONG!

IT STILL TINGLES.
YUCK! THE PERVERT! NIBBLING ON MY POOR EARLOBE! I'LL MAKE HIM PAY FOR THIS!!
Inez realiz
that Kyre
mistakes h
for a boy

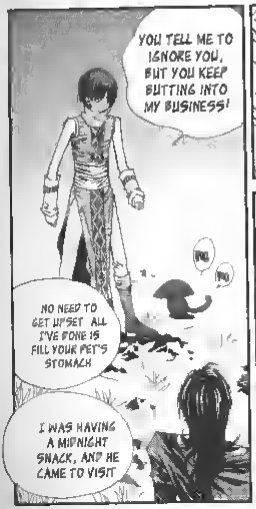
WHY IS THAT GUY FOLLOWING US?!
HEY, KIP, COMPLAIN ALL YOU WANT. THE ROAD WON'T SUDDENLY SPLIT INTO TWO
SO TRY NOT TO NOTICE ME AND STOP WASTING YOUR ENERGY SCREAMING
I KNOW IT'S
SOMEONE AS GORGEOUS AS ME, BUT AT LEAST GIVE IT A TRY, OKAY?
WHA--WHAT?!
WHY ?
WHY ?

YULAN, DO SOMETHING!
DO WHAT? IT WOULD BE A DIFFERENT STORY IF WE WERE HEADING FOR DIFFERENT PLACES.
BUT WE ARE BOTH GOING TO ELOAM...
...AND WE DON'T HAVE THE RIGHT TO ORDER HIM OFF THE ROAD.
DON'T GIVE HIM THE SATISFACTION OF BOTHERING YOU.

MONG?
MONG, WHERE ARE YOU?
YULAN, MONG IS GONE--

YOU HAVE QUITE AN APPETITE FOR A LITTLE FELLOW JUST LIKE YOUR MASTER
EAT UP--YOU'RE A GROWING BOY

HEY! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
COME HERE, MONG!


YOU TELL ME TO IGNORE YOU, BUT YOU KEEP BUTTING INTO MY BUSINESS!
NO NEED TO GET UPSET. ALL I'VE DONE IS FILL YOUR PET'S STOMACH
I WAS HAVING A MIDNIGHT SNACK, AND HE CAME TO VISIT

HE'S A NYAMA, RIGHT?
A FRIEND OF MINE TOLD ME THAT YOU CAN GET NYAMAS TO DO ANYTHING...
...IF YOU OFFER THEM FOOD
KOKUAN

BETTER BE CAREFUL.
IT IS A WIDE OPEN AREA WITH LOTS OF HUNGRY ANIMALS LURKING AROUND
AND SOME OF THEM ARE REALLY SMART

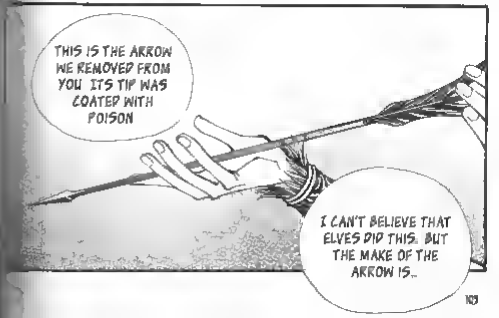
IT WAS EASY TO LURE YOUR NYAMA WITH FOOD
IF I HAD HALF A MIND TO KILL HIM
...YOUR LITTLE FRIEND WOULD ALREADY BE DEAD

IT'S TOUGH TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ANOTHER LIFE,
SWEET DREAMS, THEN
He's right We're alike in so many ways
DON'T WORRY, MONG I'LL TAKE CARE OF YOU
FOOD IS MY WEAKNESS, TOO
HOOH
HOOH
HOOH
HOOH

KNOCK
KNOCK
KNOCK
KNOCK
REANA!
REA...
HE'S WAKING UP
THANK GOD I THOUGHT HE MIGHT NOT MAKE IT HE'S LOST SO MUCH BLOOD
BUT... HE'S JUST SAYING THE SAME WORD OVER AND OVER AGAIN
RE ANA?
REANA!

REANA!

OWWW!
DON'T MOVE! THAT WOUND IS DEEP
WE PUT A SALVE ON IT, BUT THAT WON'T STOP IT FROM HURTING
IT'S NOT EASY TO BREATHE, IS IT? THERE'S POISON SPREADING ALL THROUGH YOUR BODY

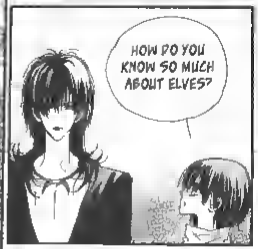

THIS IS THE ARROW WE REMOVED FROM YOU. ITS TIP WAS COATED WITH POISON
I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT ELVES DID THIS. BUT THE MAKE OF THE ARROW IS...

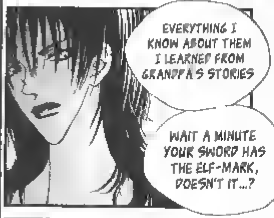
DEFINITELY ELFIN
ELVES WOULD NEVER SHOOT ONE OF THEIR OWN
WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

HE'S EXQUISITELY BEAUTIFUL, ISN'T HE?
AH!
YOU CAN LOOK, BUT YOU CAN'T TOUCH.
ELVES ARE STRICTLY OLD-FASHIONED. YOU KNOW. HETEROSEXUAL.

THAT ELF HAS AN EXTRAORDINARY CONSTITUTION
HALFLINGS ARE SOMETIMES BORN WITH DORMANT POWERS
HALFLING? YOU MEAN HE'S A HALF-ELF?
STRICTLY SPEAKING HE S NOT TRULY AN ELF
YES, ONLY HALF, NOT FULL-BLOODED

THERE'S A GOOD CHANCE THAT HE'S HALF ELF, HALF HUMAN


HOW DO YOU KNOW SO MUCH ABOUT ELVES?


EVERYTHING I KNOW ABOUT THEM I LEARNED FROM GRANDPA'S STORIES
WAIT A MINUTE YOUR SWORD HAS THE ELF-MARK, DOESN'T IT...?

HA HA HA TRY HITTING THE BOOKS, WILL YOU?
THIS IS ALL COMMON KNOWLEDGE
Pdb
Pdb

HUH?

THE ELVES' LANGUAGE IS REALLY COMPLICATED! YOU COULDN'T BEGIN TO MAKE SENSE OF IT
SOMETIMES IT'S MORE LYRICAL THAN MUSIC. SOMETIMES IT'S MORE DIRECT THAN A COMMAND
YOUR FASCINATING FRIEND YULAN CAN SPEAK THEIR LANGUAGE

HE SAYS HIS BELOVED IS IN DANGER
AND THERE'S NO TIME.. HE NEEDS OUR HELP
HE CAN'T GET TO WHERE SHE IS BY HIMSELF HE TRIED AND GOT SHOT
BUT..
..YULAN REFUSED. HE SAID THAT IT WAS NONE OF OUR BUSINESS
THAT IS NO ORDINARY BOY. WE NEED TO FIND OUT WHO HE IS.
HMM
WE'VE LOST TOO MUCH TIME. HURRY UP!
!

YOU WANT TO HELP HIM, DON'T YOU?
BUT YOUR FRIEND IS PROBABLY RIGHT.
GETTING INVOLVED MEANS PUTTING YOURSELF IN UNNECESSARY DANGER
RACING TO HELP OUT OF RECKLESS COMPASSION COULD...
...END UP THREATENING YOUR LIFE
WHOEVER'S AFTER HIM USED POISONED ARROWS THEY MEANT TO KILL HIM
TO ENTER THEIR LAIR, YOU'D HAVE TO BE WILLING TO RISK YOUR LIFE
HE'S RIGHT IF I COULD LESSEN HIS PAIN WITH MY TEARS, I WOULD CRY UNTIL I HAD NO MORE TEARS LEFT.
BUT THERE WAS NOTHING I COULD DO AGAINST THE DEMONS WE ENCOUNTERED
I WAS THE ONE WHO ENDED UP NEEDING TO BE SAVED.
WHAT WOULD MY SYMPATHY ACCOMPLISH?
I CAN'T EVEN DEFEND MYSELF

STILL ..
...YOU HAVE NO FEAR, DO YOU, LITTLE WORM?
ALTHOUGH INEZ SEEMS TO FEAR YOU
THERE THERE NOW TRY NOT TO COME OUT ONTO THE BIG ROAD AGAIN
FUSSU
FUSSU
GRANDPA, WHY DID YOU MOVE IT TO THE GRASS? ISN'T THE ROAD EASIER TO TRAVEL ON?
FOR PEOPLE, YES
BUT IT CAN BE VERY DANGEROUS FOR LITTLE CREATURES LIKE THAT ONE
HE COULD BE TRAMPLED UNDER PEOPLE'S FEET OR THEIR CARRIAGE WHEELS
SOMETIMES WE ARE NOT EVEN AWARE OF WHAT WE DO
..BUT OUR STEPS COULD LITERALLY MEAN LIFE OR DEATH TO OTHERS
NOT EVERY ACT OF COMPASSION ENDS UP BEING HELPFUL, INEZ. IT ALL DEPENDS ON THE RECIPIENT.

STILL, IF MY RECKLESS COMPASSION CAN HELP HIM...
COME ON!
...I WANT TO DO WHATEVER I CAN!

EPISODE 4
EAST GARDEN

WHAT A LOVELY PLACE!
SUCH A STRONG SENSE OF LIFE PERVADES EVERYTHING HERE.
YOU'RE TOO KIND. BUT IT'S A MATCH FOR THE BEAUTY OF ELOAM.
WE'RE LOCATED TOO CLOSE TO THE HUMAN REALM. DESPITE THE PROTECTION THE FOREST OF REFLECTION OFFERS, NOT A DAY GOES BY WITHOUT SOME DISTURBANCE.
HUMANS NO LONGER HAVE THE POWER THAT THEY USED TO. OF COURSE. BUT THEY'RE STILL ONE OF THE FEW RACES LEFT THAT POSE A THREAT TO US.
YOUR VISIT HERE COMFORTS ME SO
I CAN FEEL ALL MY WORRIES DISSOLVE AWAY.
YOUR WORDS ARE SHARP AS DAGGERS, KEYVA
WHO CAN I BLAME BUT MYSELF FOR BEING BANISHED TO THE VERY EDGE OF ELF-LAND?
IT WOULD BE WISER FOR YOU TO BE GRATEFUL THAT YOU STILL HAVE A TERRITORY TO GOVERN.

LORD KEYVA
PLEASE EXCUSE ME, LORD EZEKIEL. THERE'S AN URGENT MATTER I MUST ATTEND TO
ENJOY THE SCENERY AT YOUR LEISURE.
I'LL DO THAT. AS YOU KNOW, THAT'S ALL I CAME HERE TO DO.
HMMM... THIS LOOKS LIKE ANY OTHER FORTRESS WALL.
I THOUGHT AN ELFIN FORTRESS WOULD HAVE SOMETHING SPECIAL ABOUT IT.
WE'RE NOT HERE TO EVALUATE ARCHITECTURE. COME ON, FIGURE OUT HOW TO GET INSIDE.

HEY, KIP...YOU THINK IT'S THAT EASY TO COME UP WITH A STRATEGY?
MY NAME IS INEZ! DIDN'T I TELL YOU NOT TO CALL ME "KID"?
QUIET BOTH OF YOU!
WHY DON'T YOU SUGGEST SOMETHING SINCE YOU'RE THE ONE WHO WANTED TO COME HERE IN THE FIRST PLACE?
AND I DON'T REMEMBER ASKING YOU TO COME. IF YOU DON'T WANT TO BE HERE, YOU'RE FREE TO GO!
WE'RE JUST OUTSIDE THE EAST GARDEN
IT GETS THAT NAME BECAUSE OF IT'S LOCATION. WE'RE EAST OF THE HEART OF THE ELF-LANDS
HE ESCAPED? EVEN AFTER YOU SHOT HIM WITH A POISONED ARROW?
I GUESS THAT MEANS HE'S RUNNING AROUND FREE NOW
CLIMBING OVER THOSE WALLS IS OUT OF THE QUESTION. DON'T UNDERESTIMATE THE ELVES' ABILITY TO SENSE OUR PRESENCE HERE
YULAN, WHERE ARE WE EXACTLY? IS THIS ELOAM ALREADY?
AN ELF UNAFFECTED BY OUR POISONS... WHAT A MONSTER!

I CANNOT ALLOW MY DAUGHTER TO BE INVOLVED WITH SUCH AN ABOMINATION.
REANA.
YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS, YULAN. WE HAVE TO GO IN THERE?
IT'S THE ONLY ACCESS POINT TO THE CASTLE THAT THE ELVES DON'T GUARD.
WHOA!
THE CAVE FLOOR'S COVERED IN WATER!
HOLD ON TIGHT, MONG.
MONG!
YOU'RE FULL OF SURPRISES, YULAN.
HOW DID YOU KNOW ABOUT THIS ENTRANCE?
EVEN THE ELVES DON'T SEEM TO KNOW ABOUT IT.

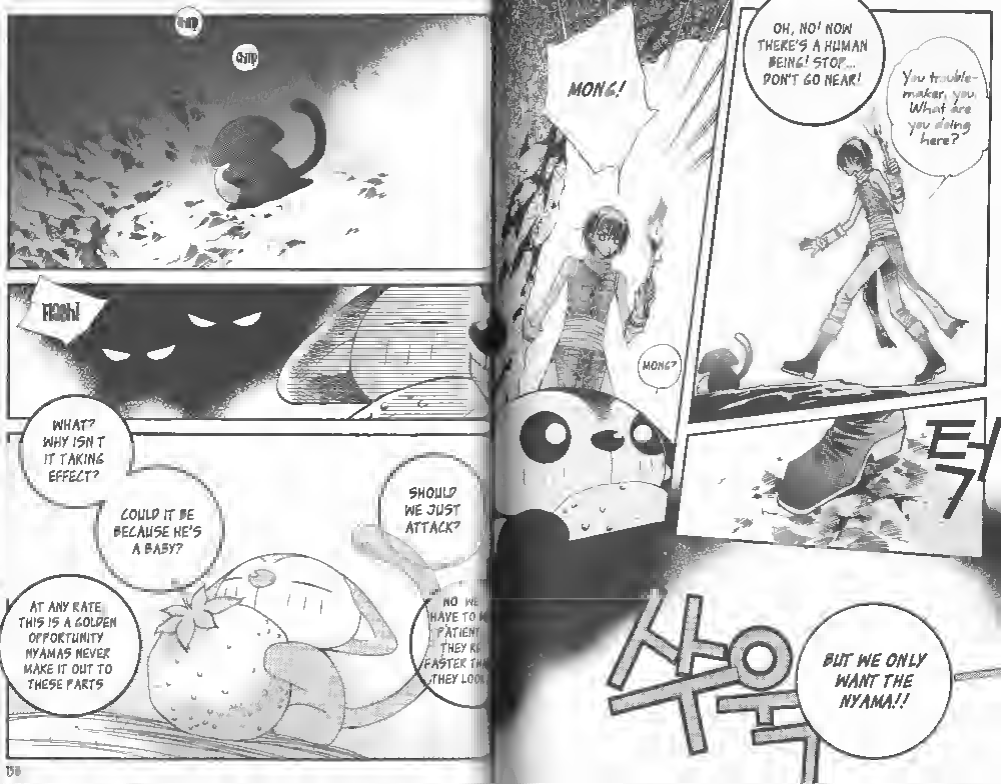
WE'RE NOT INSIDE THE CASTLE YET
THERE'S NO GUARANTEE THAT THIS UNDERGROUND PASSAGE WILL TAKE US WHERE WE WANT TO GO SAFELY
ELVES IGNORE IT BECAUSE THEY WON'T HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH DARK PLACES, EVEN ONES WITHIN THEIR TERRITORY

KEANA...
THAT LOWLY HALFLING MUST HAVE USED BLACK MAGIC AGAINST YOU.
OTHERWISE MY WISE AND BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTER WOULDN'T HAVE HAD ANYTHING TO DO WITH HIM.
FORGIVE ME FOR DOING THIS TO YOU. BUT THERE IS NO OTHER WAY TO PURIFY YOUR SOUL.
I LOVE YOU...
KEANA...

HOW DEEP IS THIS CAVE? WE'VE BEEN WALKING FOR YEARS NOW
YULAN!
HE'S FEVERISH! DO YOU THINK IT'S THE POISON ACTING UP AGAIN?
I'M NOT CERTAIN, BUT YES, SHOCK SEEMS TO HAVE WEAKENED HIS IMMUNE SYSTEM
HE NEED'S REST. HIS LIFE WILL BE IN DANGER IF HE MOVES

WHAT DID HE SAY?
WHY DO YOU LOOK SO SHOCKED, YULAN?
WHAT? SHE CAN'T UNDERSTAND WHAT HE SAID?
BUT SHE UNDERSTOOD HIM JUST FINE BEFORE
DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND ELVISH?
HOW STRANGE
DON'T BE RIDICULOUS
I'M NOT IN THE MOOD FOR YOUR JOKES, OKAY?
THEN HOW DID YOU UNDERSTAND HIM EARLIER?
HOW COULD I UNDERSTAND THEIR LANGUAGE? I'VE NEVER HEARD IT BEFORE!

HOW ELSE? HE WAS SPEAKING HUMAN BEFORE, THAT'S HOW.
WHAT'S SO STRANGE ABOUT HIM SPEAKING HUMAN? HE'S HALF-HUMAN, RIGHT?
GIVE ME A BREAK. HE'S BEEN SPEAKING IN THE ELFIN TONGUE ALL ALONG.
MONG...MONG'S GONE!
I DIDN'T EVEN REALIZE THAT HE WAS MISSING!
MONG!
THAT BOY... DOESN'T HE REALIZE THAT HE CAN UNDERSTAND THE LANGUAGE OF THE ELVES?
OR, COULD WEARING THE HEARTSBLOOD HAVE GIVEN HIM TEMPORARY KNOWLEDGE?
MONG!


Gulp
Gulp
FOOSH!
WHAT? WHY ISN'T IT TAKING EFFECT?
COULD IT BE BECAUSE HE'S A BABY?
SHOULD WE JUST ATTACK?
AT ANY RATE THIS IS A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY NYAMAS NEVER MAKE IT OUT TO THESE PARTS
MONG!
MONG?
OH, NO! NOW THERE'S A HUMAN BEING! STOP... DON'T GO NEAR!
You trouble-maker, you. What are you doing here?
BUT WE ONLY WANT THE NYAMA!!

THE HUMAN FELL IN, TOO!
WELL, IT CAN'T BE HELPED NOW. THANK GOD HE'S JUST A KID
WE'RE GOING TO NEED A BIGGER CAGE
WHAT? ANOTHER ONE?
WHAT'S GOING ON? THE BLACK-HAIRED ONE FELL IN TOO!
YOU STUPID, HE DIDN'T FALL IN
HE JUMPED!
DOES THIS MEAN ..
..WE HAVE TO BUILD TWO CAGES?

KYKETTE, ARE YOU OKAY?!
AHH
DAMN, IF I KNEW IT WAS GOING TO HURT SO MUCH, I WOULDN'T HAVE JUMPED IN
THANK GOD I DIDN'T BREAK MY BACK..
..BUT I GUESS IT WAS WORTH IT.
YOU WERE WORRIED ABOUT ME JUST NOW, RIGHT?

YOU MUST BE NUTS!
HEY, WAIT A MINUTE
YOUR HAIR'S MESSIER THAN A BIRD'S NEST ANYWAY. I'M GLAD TO SEE YOU'RE OKAY
YES
YES
!

AT LEAST WE'VE GOT ALL THE LIGHT WE COULD POSSIBLY NEED. I HAVE A FEELING WE FELL INTO SOME SORT OF A TRAP
IN FACT, I'M PRETTY DAMN SURE ABOUT THAT!
1
THE END
7
WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU? DID YOU HIT YOUR HEAD OR SOMETHING? WHY DO YOU KEEP STARING AT ME?
I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT!
COME ON, HOW ARE WE GOING TO GET OUT OF THIS MESS?

WE'LL HAVE TO FOLLOW THOSE TORCHES FOR NOW...
...SINCE WE CAN'T CLIMB BACK UP.
THAT WAS STRANGE.
IT FELT SO WEIRD.
THE MOMENT KYKETTE TOUCHED ME...
I FELT A TREMBLING RUN DOWN MY SPINE.
SO VERY DIFFERENT FROM WHEN GRANDPA USED TO PAT MY HEAD.
WHAT IS THIS FEELING?

COME ON, GET A GRIP!
I THINK YOU REALLY DID HURT YOUR HEAD WHEN YOU FELL.
AH...NOW I KNOW WHY.

大
Big
HIS HANDS ARE BIGGER THAN GRANDPA'S!
GET DOWN!
BULL'S-EYE!
YOU FOOL! YOU SHOULD HAVE SHOT THE NYAMA FIRST WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO IF IT RUNS AWAY?
I COULDN'T SHOOT HIM BECAUSE THE LITTLE ONE WAS HOLDING HIM
AND THE BIG ONE SUDDENLY THREW HIMSELF IN FRONT OF THEM!

THE REST SHOULD BE EASY ANYWAY, THEY CAN'T RUN AWAY NOW
The Big-Ears have the others.
Which makes our situation more complicated
Fortunately your fever's down, but we can't get them out of the trap by ourselves.
Big-Ears' s are like mazes.
So I'll have to locate them first
You can go back on your own. I'm sure you can find your way back to the entrance.
NO, I'M NOT GOING BACK!

I CAN'T SAVE REANA WITHOUT YOUR HELP ANYWAY.
LET ME HELP YOU SAVE YOUR FRIENDS
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
MON&!!

KYRETTE
WAKE UP
KYRETTE ..!
KYRETTE.

FINALLY! I'M SO RELIEVED.

I THOUGHT YOU'D NEVER WAKE UP

I WASN'T ASLEEP, RACHEL
?!

LIAR! I HEARD YOU SNORING.
WE HAVE TO HURRY YOU HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN YOUR PROMISE?
NO, HOW COULD I FORGET?
THEN I'LL BE WAITING
YOU HAVE TO HURRY, OKAY?
I WON'T FORGET.
I'LL NEVER FORGET...

AMAZING! HE'S TALKING IN HIS SLEEP.
HEY, WAKE UP...
ARE THOSE...TEARS?

...MPH! WHAT A WIMP.
HE'S NOT HURT. IS HE...?
THEY SHOT HIM WITH ME SORT OF TRANQUILIZER, THINK I HOPE ...LL BE OKAY
WHO ARE THEY? WHERE HAVE THEY TAKEN MONG?
DOES YULAN KNOW THAT WE'VE BEEN CAPTURED?
THIS IS ALL BACKWARDS. I WANTED TO HELP, NOT BE A NUISANCE

INEZ, YOU IDIOT!!
WHAT DID IT SAY?
DID IT JUST SAY YULAN IS HERE?

IT'S AN ELF! AN ELF!
LOOK AT HOW HIS HAIR REFLECTS THE LIGHT. PRETTY! I WANT ONE OF THOSE
I WANT ONE TOO!
FOLLOW ME.

I CAN NO LONGER SEE, BUT I CAN FEEL YOUR PRESENCE YULAN
BEING ANCIENT DOES HAVE ITS ADVANTAGES
BUT I MUST SAY THAT YOUR MANNERS ARE NOT TOO GOOD
THE NERVE BARGING IN HERE AND DEMANDING THAT I RELEASE YOUR FRIENDS WITHOUT OFFERING ME THE PROPER RESPECT
WELL, I SUPPOSE IT'S POSSIBLE THAT ONE OF MY BOYS ..
...HAS YOUR FRIENDS IN HIS COLLECTION.
BUT SURELY YOU CAN'T HAVE FORGOTTEN, YULAN...

.. THAT BIG-EARS NEVER LET GO OF ANYTHING WE ACQUIRE
COLLECTING IS, AFTER ALL, OUR PASSION
The proper word for what you call collecting is stealing, I believe.
Your warehouses are full of goods you've stolen from the elves.
For thousands of years, the elves have known about it but have left you alone.
Because you've once only stole goods and didn't harm elves.

But it appears that you now consider living beings to be collectibles too.
Lopo! Has age changed your nature so?
FAR FROM IT YOU KNOW BETTER THAN ANYONE THAT THE BIG-EARS ARE PACIFISTS
STILL, WE CAN'T RESIST WHEN A RARE CREATURE STUMBLES OUR WAY
IF YOU WISH TO RANSOM YOUR FRIENDS YOU'D BETTER BE READY TO MAKE A DEAL
MAKE US AN OFFER WE CAN'T REFUSE WE CAN'T VERY WELL LET YOUR FRIENDS GO FOR FREE, NOW CAN WE?
YOU! STOP RIGHT THERE! I SAID STOP!
WHERE IS MONG?
WHAT A RACKET
WHAT DID YOU DO WITH HIM?
HEY BIG-EARS, CAN'T YOU HEAR ME? WHAT ARE THOSE BIG EARS FOR?

STEP ASIDE..
OH, NO! THE HUMANS HAVE ESCAPED!!
WHEN DID YOU WAKE UP?
THIS SORRY EXCUSE DOESN'T DESERVE THE DIGNITY OF BEING CALLED A JAIL
AND JUST WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING?
OH, NO! THE HUMANS HAVE CAPTURED ME!!
HEY, KID! DON'T JUST STAND THERE. BRING ME A ROPE TO TIE UP THIS LOSER!
LEAD THE WAY! YOU'LL HAVE TO GET US OUT OF HERE..
NO! FIRST WE HAVE TO FIND MONG..
I'M NOT LEAVING UNTIL I FIND HIM!

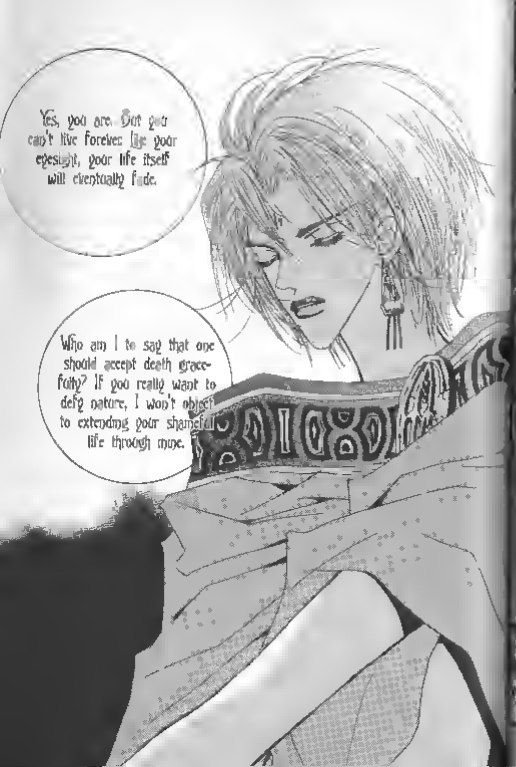
FINE, THEN
HEY, YOU HEARD WHAT THE KID SAID. LEAD THE WAY!
YESSIR!
SO MONG'S BEHIND THAT DOOR?
YES, BUT WE NEED THE KEY TO OPEN IT.
KEY?

WHERE IS IT?
UMM...
WE DON'T NEED A KEY
OH, NO! THE HUMANS HAVE BROKEN DOWN THE DOOR!!
THIS GUY'S A LITTLE TOO HIGH-STRUNG
NOT BAD. NOW THIS DESERVES TO BE CALLED A DOOR

MY GOODNESS... HOW IN THE WORLD WILL WE FIND MONG IN ALL THIS?
HA HA
I SUPPOSE I'M FATED TO LIVE A VERY LONG LIFE INDEED.
YOUR TIMING COULDN'T HAVE BEEN MORE PERFECT, YULAN
YOU MAY HAVE YOUR FRIENDS BACK
IF YOU WILL GIVE ME THAT MARVELOUS TREASURE..
.. ONCE MORE.

THE GIFT OF YOUR BLOOD.
MONG!
MONG, WHERE ARE YOU?
MONG!!
SAVE YOUR VOICE
WHAT? WHY?
HE WON'T BE ABLE TO HEAR YOU ANYWAY

MONG?
DO YOU REALLY THINK THAT WOULD KILL ME?
THANKS TO YOUR BLOOD, I'M STILL STRONG. YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT VERY WELL.


Yes, you are. But you can't live forever like your eyesight, your life itself will eventually fade.
Who am I to say that one should accept death gracefully? If you really want to defy nature, I won't object to extending your shameful life through mine.

TO BE CONTINUED IN ARCANA VOLUME 3!

THE QUEST CONTINUES IN

VOLUME 3

AS IHEZ TRIES DESPERATELY TO FREE LITTLE MOHG FROM HIS CAGE, YULAN MAKES A GREAT SACRIFICE TO LIBERATE HIS COMPANIONS FROM THE CLUTCHES OF THE BIG-EARS. SOON, ALL ROADS LEAD BACK TO THE EAST GARDEN, WHERE REYUA CONTINUES TO MANIPULATE THE DARK ARTS IN AN EFFORT TO KEEP HIS DAUGHTER AND THE HALF-ELF APART. BUT EVEN THE BEST-LAID EVIL SCHEMES DON'T ALWAYS GO ACCORDING TO PLAN. WILL IHEZ AND HER FRIENDS BE ABLE TO SAVE THE YOUNG LOVERS? FIND OUT IN THE NEXT VOLUME OF ARCANA!